



Harbinger

NOVEMBER and DECEMBER 2005

VOL. 19 NO. 6

Reflections

your prize photograph during
January and February. All photo
submissions (a limit of 3, please)

As the firearm and archery hunts for deer and turkey are quickly coming upon us, we would like to invite you to a different type of hunt at the nature center. We challenge you to stalk that elusive prey—the perfect photo—that captures, for you, the essence of the nature center. Perhaps you have been fortunate enough to have photographed wildlife on the trails, or maybe you have captured the beauty of wildflowers, trees, or a special landscape on film. Whether you have photographs you have already taken or intend to take some new ones, we would like for you to take part in Nature Center Reflections 2006.

We will accept photographs meeting the outlined criteria and taken on the nature center property that fit one of the following categories: plants, wildlife, patterns in nature, landscapes, or people. Like a hunter's trophy mounted on the wall, we will display

should be at least 5x7 inches and be matted and/or framed. An explanation of what is depicted should accompany the photograph. It can be as short as a title or as long as a few sentences that tell a story about your photo.

These explanations will be formatted for display alongside the photographs. Entries

must be received by December 15. Photos will be returned to their owners after the exhibition period.

So, let the hunting begin! Put on your hiking boots, arm yourselves with cameras, track and snare that perfect photo, then submit your trophy moment for display at the nature center. Remember, a picture is only worth a thousand words *if* you share it with others.



Submission Guidelines

All photographs submitted for the photo display should meet the following criteria:

- ◆ taken on the nature center property;
- ◆ measure at least 5x7 inches and be matted and/or framed;
- ◆ accompanied by a narrative description;
- ◆ submitted by December 15, 2005; and
- ◆ fit one of the following categories: plants, wildlife, patterns in nature, landscapes, or people.

Photos will be displayed during January and February then returned to the photographers.

The View From The Bridge

With the rush toward the gift-giving holidays coming earlier every year, Thanksgiving doesn't get its due. We hardly make it through Halloween before evergreen potpourri and Christmas tunes assault our senses in an effort by merchants to get us into the spirit of shopping. Perhaps the state of being *thankful* simply can't be marketed. Oh, there's plenty of Thanksgiving holiday-related merchandise you can buy but fall décor, plastic yard turkeys, and pilgrim cutouts for the front porch hardly constitute thankfulness. Thanksgiving is an *expression*.

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday, not only because it gives us permission to slow down for a few minutes to linger around the dinner table with our families and friends (after spending eight hours cooking the meal), but because we're given time to reflect upon our many benefits. Here's a short list of some of the things that immediately come to mind when I express my gratitude at work:

- ♦ A dedicated and hard-working staff who routinely put extra effort into working as a team and making excellent customer service a priority. They make my job easier, they are a pleasure to work with, and their creativity is endless.
- ♦ Volunteers who help us with every aspect of nature center operations—from greeting visitors to presenting programs, they do it all. Last year, 50 active volunteers donated more than 7,700 hours, which is equivalent to the time contributed by nearly 4 full-time staff members!
- ♦ Other Conservation Department staff members who provide technical support on issues ranging from maintaining the building and trails to managing the land.
- ♦ The foresight of conservation-oriented citizens also tops my list. They made possible the 1/8 of 1 percent sales tax earmarked for the Conservation Department that has provided approximately 2/3 of our funding since 1976.
- ♦ Hunters and anglers who support conservation efforts through their deep connection to the land and by their financial support made possible through the sale of permits.
- ♦ For everyone who enjoys the natural world and seeks to learn more about the intricacies of how it functions.
- ♦ For the deer and wild turkeys I see daily which remind me of what a special place this is to work.
- ♦ Finally, for you, our visitors, who support the nature center through your visits, your attendance at programs, and your interest in conservation.

To me, Thanksgiving is being aware and appreciative of our benefits, which I am, and that can't be marketed or purchased. And, seeing a real live turkey everyday, that's *priceless*.

Linda
Linda F. Chorice,
Nature Center Manager

The Springfield Conservation Nature Center is located in southeast Springfield just west of US-65 off the James River Freeway (US-60). The area is open daily 8am to 9pm from March 1 to October 31, and 8am to 6pm during the remainder of the year. The building is open daily from 8am to 5pm year 'round. The building and area are closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. The area is closed to pets, bicycles, roller blades, hunting, fishing, collecting, and alcoholic beverages. No fees are charged.

Phone: 417/888-4237 Fax: 417/888-4241 <www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/springfd>

The Nature Nook

'Tis the season...



...for the 2006 calendar

Featured Special: November/December **Birds In Missouri**

Softbound Edition

This beautiful, full-color book has 354 bird species illustrated. It also includes range maps and seasonal abundance graphs. Seventeen two-page habitat scenes portray Missouri's diverse natural and urban landscapes.

Discounted price: \$24 plus tax.

Heritage card discount does not apply.

**Holiday
Sale**

December 19-23

15% off all Nature Nook items

Heritage card discount does not apply.

Thank You

Our thanks go out to Glenn Dawson, Janice Kohler, John Southern, Charles Hutchins, Martha Hammond, Kevin Collier, and John Peine for their donations of natural objects. We would also like to thank Dominique Evans and Jennifer Walton for picking up trash.

Temporary Display

November/December

Winter Birds

Photography by Kay Johnson

Ask The Naturalist



Seasonal changes spark many questions. In this section, we answer some common questions about natural events.

What is removing the bark from my trees?

In the fall, some people may notice that bark is rubbed off of their small trees. If you are seeing this, chances are you have a male (buck) white-tailed deer in your area. Increased testosterone levels alter the buck's behavior in advance of the breeding season. These rubs, ranging in size from 6 or 8 inches up to 3 feet or more, are signs left behind by individual bucks to advertise their presence. Rubs provide both visual clues and scents for other deer in the area.

Why do I only occasionally see chipmunks in winter?

Typically in later November, chipmunks disappear below ground. They exhibit varying degrees of hibernation. Some enter a state of dormancy which requires less energy to survive the winter due to lowered body temperature and reduced heart rate. Some are seen out of their burrows during warmer days while others remain active all winter. By the end of February or early March, all chipmunks become active again.

Where can I find crappie in winter?

Crappie is one of Missouri's most sought after game fish. Late fall or early winter can be one of the most productive times for crappie fishing in southwest Missouri. During this time, crappie form large schools around standing timber, brush piles, or along steep river or creek banks. These fish can be found in water depths of 15 to 30 feet, and sometimes as deep as 60 feet, depending on water temperature.

Chipping In . . . A New Class of Volunteer Naturalists

You may be seeing some new faces at the nature center. We would like to introduce to you a class of Volunteer Naturalists who will graduate on November 7. They have completed 32 hours of training, and have agreed to donate a minimum of 12 hours each month for the next year. Please take a moment to meet these talented Volunteer Naturalists on your next visit.

- ♦ **Trenton Armour**—a truck driver for Comfort Products Distributors and a student at Missouri State University majoring in Wildlife Conservation & Management
- ♦ **Ryan Brown**—an Ozarks Technical Community College student and yoga instructor who has been an active volunteer with a Haiti Mission trip, a tornado cleanup, The Kitchen, and Boy Scouts
- ♦ **Anna Cross**—a recent graduate from the University of Missouri-St. Louis with a degree in Biology who finds working with children very rewarding
- ♦ **Jill Daniels**—a kindergarten teacher who in the past operated a canoe outfitter business on the Buffalo River in Arkansas with her husband Art (also a Volunteer Naturalist)
- ♦ **Jeannette Erter**—a Volunteer Naturalist from Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center near Kansas City who recently moved to the Springfield area and joined our volunteer program
- ♦ **Maryann Harter**—a member of the Missouri Herpetological Society who has years of experience with captive reptiles through the Finley Valley Serpenterium
- ♦ **Sheryl Heun**—a microbiologist with a background in food safety and animal diseases who enjoys camping, fishing, hiking, and traveling
- ♦ **Gregg Krumme**—a lecturer and laboratory supervisor of Biomedical Sciences at Missouri State University who enjoys hunting, fishing, canoeing, nature photography, and fencing
- ♦ **Jenay Lamy**—a student at Ozarks Technical Community College who has grown up with the nature center over the years while attending programs
- ♦ **Dean Rising**—a retired pediatrician from St. John's Pediatrics and an active member of the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society
- ♦ **Louis Rousselot**—a retired engineer and native of Argentina who spends time hiking the nature center trails and volunteering with the Grupo Americano Latino
- ♦ **Carol Snyder**—a member of the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society, a local garden club, and the Sierra Club who has extensive experience in public relations
- ♦ **Hillary Taylor**—a Senior Planner for the City of Springfield who has volunteered for Americorps Soup Kitchens for over 13 years and has interests in insects, ecosystems, and watershed management
- ♦ **Tim Warden**—a computer programmer for American National Insurance Company whose hobbies include photography, hiking, and making violins
- ♦ **Leslie Webster**—a student at Missouri State University majoring in Wildlife Conservation & Management and a member of a Stream Team

We look forward to the contributions of time and energy that they will provide. Please join us in thanking them for chipping in.

Volunteer Milestones

Ted Lane.....1250 Hours

Steve Craig.....400 Hours

Luke Malone.....400 Hours

Here's Lookin' At Ya

Not only are we watching our winter birds but we're counting them as well. As participants in Cornell University's Project FeederWatch, nature center staff and volunteers will keep track of the numbers of each bird species found at the feeders from late fall through the winter. (See schedule below.) Come on out and join us. Count if you like or just enjoy watching the birds.

Project FeederWatch Count Dates:

Nov 22/23	Jan 31/Feb 1
Dec 6/7	Feb 14/15
Dec 20/21	Feb 28/March 1
Jan 3/4	March 14/15
Jan 17/18	March 28/29

The nature center building and area will be closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

Springfield Conservation Nature Center
Missouri Department of Conservation
4600 South Chrisman
Springfield, MO 65804-4931
Phone 417/888-4237
Fax: 417/888-4241

<<http://www.MissouriConservation.org>>



Harbinger

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November Events

SPRINGFIELD CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER



5 Hiked It . . . Liked It! Weekend Hike

Saturday, 9-11am

Enjoy a volunteer naturalist-guided hike on the trails. Families.



Still Life: Songbirds In Wood

Saturday, 9am-4pm

Enjoy the wood carvings of Marshfield artist Thomas E. Farr. Farr will be demonstrating his craft, displaying his lifelike carved songbirds, and selling carved feathers. Drop by anytime.

6 Still Life: Songbirds In Wood

Sunday, 11am-4pm

Enjoy the wood carvings of Marshfield artist Thomas E. Farr. Farr will be demonstrating his craft, displaying his lifelike carved songbirds, and selling carved feathers. Drop by anytime.

For Adults Only

Archery For Beginners

Sunday, 1-3pm

Learn the basics of archery and spend time practicing your new skills at the shooting range at Bois D'Arc Conservation Area. Meet at the range and bring your own gear if you have it. Ages 18-adult. *Registration begins October 15.*

Little Acorns

Little Acorns programs are for children 3-6 years and are 45-minutes in length. Please limit **Little Acorns** programs to one per month. Registration required.

Trail Trackin'

Hey, footprint friends! Join us to learn about tracks and other signs left behind by animals. Make a track and do some trail trackin' indoors.

Thursday, November 17, 11am or 1pm

Saturday, November 19, 11am

All For Fall

Join Volunteer Naturalist Nancy Ryan and discover what's happening as nature prepares for the chilly months ahead.

Friday, November 18, 11am or 1pm

Turkey Time

Time to talk turkey! Tote the tots in for a fun and factual look at wild turkeys. We'll have a gobbling good time crafting a "turkey" to take home.

Tuesday, November 22, 1pm or 6pm

Wednesday, November 23, 11am

REGISTRATION

Call the nature center at **417/888-4237** on or after November 1 to register for November programs requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call to cancel so that someone on the waiting list may attend.

9 Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

Wednesday, 11-11:30am

Join Volunteer Naturalist Joyce Tolliver as she reads a nature story and shares activities with your 2-6 year olds. Please, no organized groups.



12 Hiking Club

Saturday, 8am-5pm

Explore one of the earliest areas acquired by the Conservation Department. Volunteer Naturalist Mike Mihalik will lead a hike at Caney Mountain Conservation Area. Pack a sack lunch, bring plenty of water, and wear sturdy, comfortable hiking shoes. Hike is approximately five miles and rated moderate in difficulty. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

Conservation TEEN Club Winter Survival Skills Hike

Saturday, 1-5pm

You are out for a winter hike when you realize you are lost. It is cold and you have very limited supplies. Would you know how to survive? Join Primitive Skills Specialist Don Brink for a survival hike at Henning Conservation Area as he demonstrates both primitive and modern survival skills. Ages 12-17. Registration required.

Intermediate Photography

Saturday, 1:30-4:30pm

This course will cover both 35mm and digital photography using nature as the primary subject. The workshop includes a lecture by Volunteer Naturalist Art Daniels and a photography session in the field. Bring your camera, film, lenses, and a tripod. Ages 15-adult. Registration required.

18 Hunter Education

Friday, 6-9pm and

Saturday, 8am-5pm

This 10-hour course is required for anyone born after January 1, 1967, who wants to hunt with firearms in Missouri. This course is continued on Saturday from 8am to 5pm (lunch break given—lunch not provided). You must pass a written test to be certified. Ages 11-adult. *Call today to register.*

**VIDEOS ARE SHOWN
EVERY SUNDAY
FROM 2-3pm.**

19 Winter Tree Identification

Saturday, 9:30-11am

Identifying trees in winter requires know-how and an eye for detail. Dress for the outdoors as Volunteer Naturalist Earl Niewald helps you get to know trees without their leaves. Ages 15-adult. Registration required.

The nature center building and area will be closed on

Thursday, November 24.



25 Discovery Table Let's Talk Turkey

Friday, 1-4pm

Drop by for a closer look at turkeys.

Sweet Songs From Missouri Woodlands

Friday, 1-3pm

Stop by to enjoy dulcimer melodies performed by Paul M. Harvey and to learn about various wood products made from native Missouri trees.

26 Ozark Whittlers & Woodcarvers

Saturday, 10am-4pm

Stop by anytime to watch members of the Ozark Whittlers & Woodcarvers transform wood into treasures.

Discovery Table Let's Talk Turkey

Saturday, 1-4pm

Drop by for a closer look at turkeys.

29 Conservation Kids' Club In The Dark With Lewis & Clark

Tuesday, 6:30-7:45pm

Intrepid explorers Lewis & Clark faced many challenges on their trip to the Pacific and back, not the least of which was surviving the long nights. From nighttime predators to freezing cold temperatures, nightfall brought new dangers. Face *your* fears of the dark as you learn about nighttime survival in this indoor/outdoor program. Don't forget to dress for the weather. Ages 7-12 years only. Please, no younger siblings. Registration required.



December Events

SPRINGFIELD CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER



3 Hiked It . . . Liked It! Weekend Hike

Saturday, 9-11am

Enjoy a volunteer naturalist-guided hike on the trails. Families.



Digital Photography For Beginners Saturday, 1-2:30pm

Thinking about buying a digital camera or already have one but find it a little confusing? Join Volunteer Naturalist Bob Ball to learn how to use these versatile cameras that can rival conventional equipment. Nature photography will be emphasized. If you already have a digital camera, bring both the camera and the manual. Ages 12-adult. *Registration begins November 15.*

4 A Day With A Naturalist Nature Jaunt

Sunday, 1-4pm

For families with deaf and/or hearing-impaired members. Please note that this program will be presented in sign language only. Venture out into the wild with Naturalist Sheri Medlock on a winter hike in search of wildlife clues and other signs. Dress for the weather. *Call today to register.*

6 Selecting Tree Seedlings Tuesday, 10-11am or 5:30-6:30pm

Join Urban Forester Cindy Garner as she guides you in choosing the right tree seedlings. She will cover information from ordering seedlings to planting them in the right place. Ages 10-adult. Registration required.

You Got Game? Tuesday, 7-9pm

What do I do with game taken from the field? Outdoor enthusiasts always have questions about care and usage of nature's bounty. Come enjoy a wild game taste-testing treat. Learn how to care for game taken from the field and then prepare it for the table. Taste samples of wild game from fish to venison. Copies of our favorite recipes will be available. Ages 10-adult. Registration required.

9 Hunter Education Friday, 6-9pm and Saturday, 8am-5pm

This 10-hour course is required for anyone born after January 1, 1967, who wants to hunt with firearms in Missouri. This course is continued on Saturday from 8am to 5pm (lunch break given—lunch not provided). You must pass a written test to be certified. Ages 11-adult. *Call today to register.*

10 Conservation Kids' Club Holiday Crafts For Kids

Saturday, 10-11:30am or 11:30am-1pm

Hey, kids! Here's your chance to make natural presents for your holiday gift giving. You just need a little creativity and a few materials to recycle—we'll supply the rest. Please bring the following items: a large paper sack, a 29-ounce tin can (the size peaches and pumpkin come in), and a Phillips screwdriver labeled with your name. Ages 7-12 years. Please, no younger siblings. Registration required.

REGISTRATION

Call the nature center at **417/888-4237** on or after December 1 to register for December programs requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call to cancel so that someone on the waiting list may attend.

10 Conservation TEEN Club Year-End Review

Saturday, 3-4:30pm

Join us as we celebrate the close of another successful year of TEEN Club. After viewing a slide show of the year's outings, we'll enjoy cake and vote on possible TEEN Club outings for 2006. Prospective and current members, ages 12-17, and their families are welcome to attend. Registration required.

11 Who Eats Who-o-o? Sunday, 1-3pm

Owls sit atop a long and twisted food chain. Owl pellets provide clues to help unravel that chain. Learn what owl pellets are and then dissect them to identify what's inside. Ages 7-adult. Registration required.

14 Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

Wednesday, 11-11:30am



Join Volunteer Naturalist Joyce Tolliver as she reads a nature story and shares activities with your 2-6 year olds. Please, no organized groups.

15 For Adults Only Orienteering 101 - Part 1 Thursday, 7-9pm

During this indoor portion, you'll learn the basics of using a compass and topographic maps. To put your new-found knowledge to the test, register for Part II on December 17. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

16 Evening Stroll Friday, 6-9pm

You've seen the fancy flashing light displays all over town—now come out for a quieter, old-fashioned holiday evening. Enjoy a crackling fire and hot cider and browse through the gift shop when you come indoors to warm up. The trails will be opened and patrolled, so bring a flashlight and a walking buddy because you're on your own.

17 For Adults Only Orienteering 101 - Part II Saturday, 8am-1pm

Test your orienteering skills at Little Sac Woods Conservation Area. You must attend Part I on December 15 before attending Part II. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

Hiking Club

Saturday, 8am-4pm

Never get lost again! During this class, you'll learn the basics of using a compass and topographic maps. After honing your skills in the classroom, we'll carpool to a local forest where you can put your new-found knowledge to the test. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

Ozark Whittlers & Woodcarvers Saturday, 10am-4pm

Stop by to see members of the Ozark Whittlers & Woodcarvers transform wood into treasures.



The nature center building and area will be closed on Saturday, December 24 and Sunday, December 25.

27 Discovery Table Animal Tracks

Tuesday, 9am-Noon

Drop by anytime to learn about animal tracks.

Feeder Frenzy Tuesday, 3-4pm

Join one of our bird expert Volunteer Naturalists to learn about feeder birds.

28 Toddler Tales Wednesday, 10-10:30am or 11-11:30am

Bring your tots to hear a special tale about nature and to complete a craft project.

Snowflake Hike Wednesday, 1-2pm

Join a guided hike to search for signs of winter—and maybe a snowflake or two!

29 Discovery Table Backyard Birds

Thursday, 9am-Noon

Stop by to learn about winter birds and how to make bird feeders.

Missouri Mammals Thursday, 2-3pm

Bring your family to learn about common mammals in Missouri.

30 Toddler Tales Friday, 10-10:30am or 11-11:30am

Bring your tots to hear a special tale about nature and to complete a craft project.

Winter Bird Walk Friday, 1-2pm

Dress warmly and join us for a winter bird walk. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them.

Little Acorns

Little Acorns programs are for children 3-6 years and are 45-minutes in length. Please limit *Little Acorns* programs to one per month. Registration required.

Classy Cardinals

Cardinals add a splash of color and a burst of song to the winter landscape. Come brighten your day as we explore the world of cardinals.

Thursday, December 8, 1pm or 6pm

Friday, December 9, 11am

Furry Scurry

If you're furry, you don't need to worry about a cold winter flurry. Want to know why? Then hurry to the nature center for this program on mammals and their fur.

Friday, December 16, 11am or 1pm

Saturday, December 17, 11am

VIDEOS ARE SHOWN
EVERY SUNDAY
FROM 2-3pm.